AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

1. - 8.   (Canceled)

9.   (Currently Amended) An apparatus for generating a complex speech model associated to a given speech element, said complex speech model being suitable for use by a speech recognition device during speech recognition, said apparatus comprising:

-    an input for receiving an input signal derived from a spoken utterance that contains at least one speech element that potentially matches the given speech element;

-    a model group associated to the given speech element, said model group comprising a plurality of speech models, each speech model of said plurality of speech models being a different representation of the given speech element, said model group comprising two sets of speech models namely a first set having speech models of a first type and a second set having speech models of a second type, each speech model of a first type in said first set being associated to a speech model of the second type in the second set;

-    a processing unit coupled to the input for:

a)   processing the input signal and the model group to generate a hybrid speech model associated to the given speech element, said hybrid speech model being a weighted combination of speech models of the first type in said plurality of speech models effected on the basis of the input signal derived from the spoken utterance;

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b)   processing the hybrid speech model to generate a the complex speech model

associated to the given speech element, said complex speech model being a

weighted combination of speech models of the second type in said plurality

of speech models;

-       an output for releasing a signal indicative of said complex speech model associated

to the given speech element in a format suitable for use by a speech recognition

device.

10.   (Previously Presented) An apparatus as defined in claim 9, wherein any speech model of a

second type is indicative of a speech model having a higher complexity than a speech model of a first

type to which the respective speech model of a second type is associated.

11.   (Original) An apparatus as defined in claim 10, wherein the given speech element is

indicative of a data element selected from the set consisting of phones, diphones, syllables and

words.

12.   (Original) An apparatus as defined in claim 11, wherein said input signal derived from a

spoken utterance is indicative of a speaker specific speech model associated to the at least one speech

element.

13.   (Original) An apparatus as defined in claim 12, wherein said hybrid speech model is

weighted toward the speaker specific speech model.

14.   (Original) An apparatus as defined in claim 13, wherein said hybrid speech model is derived

by computing a linear combination of the speech models of the first type.

15.   (Original) An apparatus as defined in claim 14, wherein said linear combination is a first

linear combination and is characterized by a first set of parameters indicative of weights associated

to speech models of the first type, said complex speech model being derived by computing a second

linear combination of the speech models of the second type, said second linear combination being

characterized by a second set of parameters indicative of weights associated to speech models of the

second type.

16.   (Original) An apparatus as defined in claim 15, wherein said first set of parameters and said

second set of parameters are indicative of substantially same weights.

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17.   (Original) An apparatus as defined in claim 10, wherein said input is a first input and wherein said input signal is a first input signal, said apparatus further comprising:

a)   a second input for receiving a second input signal indicative of a data element identifying the given speech element;

b)   a database of model groups comprising a plurality of model groups, each model group being associated to a respective speech element, each model group comprising two sets of speech models namely a first set having speech models of a first type and a second set having speech models of a second type, each speech model of a first type in said first set being associated to a speech model of the second type in the second set;

said processing unit being further operative for extracting from said database of model groups a certain model group associated to the data element received at said second input identifying the given speech element.

18. - 27.   (Canceled).

28.   (Currently Amended) A speech recognition system comprising:

-      an input for receiving an input signal indicative of a spoken utterance that is

indicative of at least one speech element;

-      a first processing unit coupled to said input operative for processing the input signal

to derive from a speech recognition dictionary at least one speech model associated

to a given speech element that constitutes a potential match to the at least one speech

element, and wherein said first processing unit is operative for generating a speaker

specific speech model derived on the basis of the input signal, the speaker specific

speech model being indicative of the acoustic characteristics of the least one speech

element;

-      a second processing unit coupled to said first processing unit for generating, using

a predefined weighting constraint, a modified version of the at least one speech

model on the basis of the input signal;

-      a third processing unit coupled to said second processing unit for processing the input

signal on the basis of the modified version of the at least one speech model to

generate a recognition result indicative of whether the modified version of the at least

one speech model constitutes a match to the input signal

-      an output for releasing a signal indicative of the recognition result; and

A speech recognition system as defined in claim 22, wherein said modified version of the at least

one speech model is indicative of a complex speech model associated to the given speech element.

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29.   (Currently Amended) A speech recognition system as defined in claim 28, wherein said second processing unit comprises:

-    coupling member for allowing data exchange between the first processing unit and the second processing unit, said coupling member being suitable for receiving the speaker specific speech model derived from the input signal;

-    a model group associated to the given speech element, said model group comprising a plurality of speech models, each speech model of said plurality of speech models being a different representation of the given speech element, said model group comprising two sets of speech models namely a first set having speech models of a first type and a second set having speech models of a second type, each speech model of a first type in said first set being associated to a speech model of the second type in the second set;

-    a functional unit coupled to the coupling member for:

a)   processing the speaker specific speech model and the model group to generate a hybrid speech model associated to the given speech element, said hybrid speech model being a weighted combination of speech models of the first type in said plurality of speech models effected on the basis of the speaker specific speech model;

b)   processing the hybrid speech model to generate a the complex speech model associated to the given speech element, said complex speech model being a combination of speech models of the second type in said plurality of speech models;

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- an output coupling member for allowing data exchange between the second

processing unit and the third processing unit, said coupling member being suitable

for releasing a signal indicative of the complex speech model associated to the given

speech element.

30.   (Previously Presented) A speech recognition system as defined in claim 29, wherein any

speech model of the second type is indicative of a speech model having a higher complexity than a

speech model of the first type to which the speech model of the second type is associated.

31.   (Original) A speech recognition system as defined in claim 30, wherein said hybrid speech

model is weighted toward the speaker specific speech model.

32.   (Original) A speech recognition system as defined in claim 31, wherein said hybrid speech

model is derived by computing a linear combination of the speech models of the first type.

33.   (Original)   A speech recognition system as defined in claim 32, wherein said linear combination is a first linear combination and is characterized by a first set of parameters indicative of weights associated to speech models of the first type, said complex speech model being derived by computing a second linear combination of the speech models of the second type, said second linear combination being characterized by a second set of parameters indicative of weights associated to speech models of the second type.

34.   (Original)   A speech recognition system as defined in claim 33, wherein said first set of parameters and said second set of parameters is indicative of substantially the same weights.

35. - 36.   (Canceled).

37.   (Previously Presented) An apparatus as defined in claim 15, wherein a relationship between said first set of parameters and said second set of parameters is dependent on a distance between the hybrid model and the input signal.

38.   (Previously Presented)   An apparatus as defined in claim 37, wherein the processing unit further comprises:

a fall-back unit conditioning the weighted combination of speech models of the second type by interpolation to a degree based upon a distance between the hybrid model and the input signal.